TOWN
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HURCH

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No. 57
December, 1949

A Visit to Oberlin's Parish

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• Years ago I had resolved that if I ever went to Europe I would visit the parish of John Frederic Oberlin. The trip to Europe was postponed many times, recently by the disruptions of World War II. In 1949 the opportunity for a vacation in Europe finally came.

Writings about Oberlin were reread. Waldersbach, the home of Oberlin, was spotted on a map. This was not accomplished without difficulty. It is a small place, some thirty miles southwest of the city of Strasburg in Alsace. The plans were quickly completed when the Rev. and Mrs. M. R. Zigler, of the Church of the Brethren, at work in Geneva, offered to take Mrs. Landis and me into the parish of the Vosges Mountains. The Ziglers wanted to go as readily as we.

Four Americans thus journeyed by car on a Saturday from Switzerland to the wooded mountains of southwestern Alsace. The ranges there resemble those of the Green Mountains of Vermont. After an informal call on Dr. Albert Schweitzer, who was at home nearby in his native village of Günsbach, we arrived to find that in Waldersbach all the people speak French.

There was no interpreter available, but the present pastor, the Rev. Jean Michel Beltrando, had studied English in college. When I spoke English slowly he understood me well; when he spoke English I had no difficulty understanding him. My poor French was fortunately not much called upon, and the Europeans once more demonstrated that they are better linguists than Americans.

Entering the Parish

We entered the parish first at the village of Fouday, which has one of the churches served by the present pastor. In the cemetery there is the grave of Oberlin. We found sprigs of heather in a receptacle on the headstone, evidence that the people care tenderly for the grave and keep green the memory of this man who is probably the best known among American rural churches of the country ministers of the world. Oberlin served the church at Fouday, too—he had five preaching points—but he was not, according to the records, ever formally installed as pastor at this place.

Here we found that several of the older residents spoke German, which is better known than French to this writer, and we sought directions to Waldersbach, the home and the church of Oberlin. The parsonage or manse is today named "Presbytere Oberlin." In Europe the term presbytery is sometimes used to designate the dwelling place of the pastor of a local church.

The Building

At Waldersbach stands the old stone church, little changed from the day of Oberlin, who died in 1826. The gallery has ancient logs for both seats and backs. We did not inquire when they were installed. It was undoubtedly intended that the logs should be squared for the purpose of seating, but the rough-hewn trees spoke of a type of building of an early day.

The floor is of stone. The pulpit is the high one found in many of the rural churches of the region. The arrangement of the interior was different from any that had been seen by four people who together had looked upon the interiors of many rural churches in many parts of the world. Seats are found on three sides of the church, and they run about equal depth. The altar and baptismal fount, plus a table and chairs, are then placed together in the section that remains. Above these is the high pulpit. The sun streamed into church when we were there. Up into Oberlin's pulpit I went to see the plain, substantial structure just about as he saw it.

Here at Waldersbach, the body of the wife of Oberlin was interred under one of the walls of the building, and a suitable metal tablet is installed in the stone as a memorial. The biographers of Oberlin do not fail to record the role of the country

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PACIFIC SCHOOL

minister's wife, which was as important as the same role in most parishes today.

The Study

We were taken promptly into Oberlin's study. Here we saw a copy of one of his sermons written in his own hand. Here were copies of little sheets on which he printed Bible passages on a little hand printing press that he himself operated. Here were samples of Oberlin's handicraft. For Oberlin was an educator who stressed the importance of work with the hands. He both made useful things with his hands and taught children to make them.

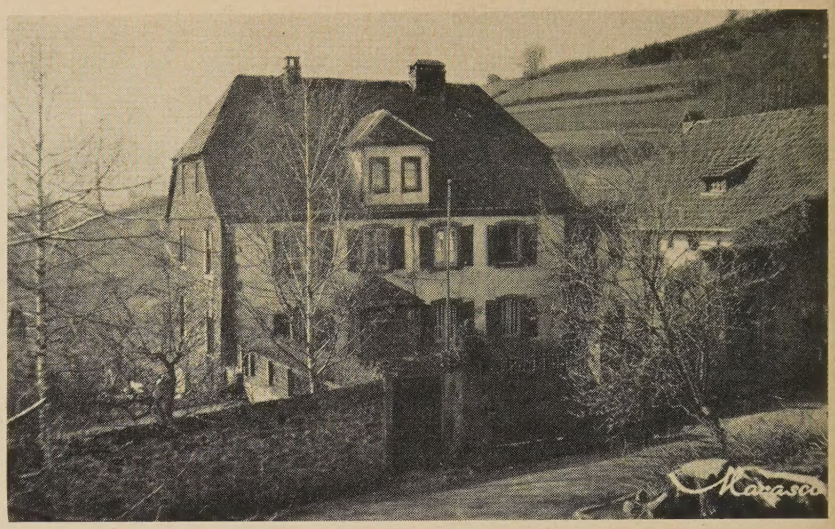
I asked Pastor Beltrando whether visitors had come recently from America. He said not for some years, until 1948, when a few of those who attended the Amsterdam Assembly of the World Council of Churches had made their way to Waldersbach.

In Oberlin's study, too, there is a symbolic picture on the wall. From one angle it looks like a bird; from another, like a rose. Kenneth MacArthur of Massachusetts, a student of Oberlin, says that the latter used the picture to indicate how two honest men might differ simply because they had different points of view.

A Sunday Service

On Sunday morning we went to the service in the church at Fouday, which was the first of three to be conducted that day by Pastor Beltrando. He read in French the liturgy that is read in the Lutheran churches of Alsace. The visitors tried to join the singing of familiar hymns. For the sermon, the pastor ascended the high pulpit and read his message. The arrangement of the interior of the building was the same as that of Waldersbach.

The service was well attended. The number of worshipers was probably the same as in many country churches in the U.S.A. There are about 650 souls in the parish, Pastor Beltrando stated, including the three points of Waldersbach, Fouday and Belmont. The church at Belmont is the oldest of the three. It is also at the highest point in the mountains, and is difficult to reach in the cold winter months. Pastor Beltrando uses a motorcycle to do his parish work.



The Parsonage of Oberlin at Waldersbach

Bridge of Charity

Near Fouday we saw the successor to Oberlin's famous "bridge of charity." It is now a modern, stone structure. Oberlin initiated the building of a bridge over the Bruche River as an important means of economic improvement. He labored against great odds in this enterprise, as in his road building and his agricultural experiments.

The parsonage, like the other structures, bears well the weight of the years. Fortunately, the study is well preserved.

A Victory

One aspect of the life of this man was uppermost in my mind as I went about the place where he lived. The scene of this phase was not in Waldersbach, but in the city of Strasburg. Oberlin was at work as a private tutor when Pastor Stuber came from Waldersbach to say that he (Stuber) must leave the Vosges Mountains because his wife's health was failing. Stuber also came to Oberlin saying: "You are the man." After pressing upon Oberlin the need of the people, Stuber said he would return later for his answer. But Oberlin asked that they both kneel at once and implore God's guidance. Soon they joined hands in silence. The issue was settled. Oberlin would go to Waldersbach.

Oberlin's biographers rightly pay much attention to the victory that was won that night in Strasburg. The proud city has been the scene of the celebration of mighty victories. They have waved the cross of Lorraine high on the battle flags in the streets of Strasburg. No banners waved when the victory of Oberlin was won, and on March 30, 1767, in his 27th year, he arrived at Strasburg. But the struggles in the heart of one young man "made this decision a more glorious conquering than ever came to any hero of war," wrote Augustus Field Beard in *The Story of John Frederic Oberlin.*

No descendants of Oberlin live in the community which he served so long and well. The village of Fouday was the scene of skirmishes but no serious fighting during World War II.

In Strasburg, the city has named a street after Oberlin. There is also an Oberlin Museum, which we could not enter because we were in Strasburg on a Sunday afternoon when the building was closed.

Oberlin is one of the few country ministers of the world after whom educational institutions were named. On our same tour we visited Keble College at Oxford, England, said to be the only college in the British Isles named after a country minister (see TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH for September 1948).

Oberlin, the Pastor at Waldersbach

RALPH B. IMES

John Frederic Oberlin was more
n a minister in the Lutheran
urch. He was a great rural pastor,
nistering to the parish of the
n-de-la-Roche in Alsace.
imbued with the scientific method,
and his wife established the first
ool for small children on the
ntinent. His introduction of
dern methods of farming and
gal industry made the valley a
osperous, cultured place. He was
corated by the French govern-
ent; he weathered famines and
volutions; he was deeply interested
the moral health of all people;
t, above all, he remained "a man
the soil."

This thumbnail sketch of a true
an of the soil is familiar to most
us. But few of us realize the
amatic, dynamic life he lived. His
fe moved like the scenes of a great
rama.

trasburg

It is the year 1760, in the city of
trasburg in Alsace. Oberlin—a
edium-built, handsome lad of
venty years who is soon to grad-
ate from the seminary—is busy in
is simple dormitory room packing.
He moves with his roommate to
heir lone window which overlooks
he historic, old St. Thomas's Church.
t is here that he made the decision
o delay his ministry until he could
nd a church that was a challenge:
ne that needed real labor.

And so Oberlin became a tutor at
Dr. Ziegenhagen's where he also
elped in the simple laboratory.
There he learned respect for scien-
ific methods as he worked and kept
ecords of the experiments.

One day a toothache forced him
o go home to his attic apartment.
There the Rev. George Stuber
ound him with his swollen jaw
bandaged. Stuber had been pastor
of the Ban-de-la-Roche in the Stein-
thal, the stone valley, but had to
move because of his wife's illness.

Stuber's description of the parish
of La Roche was so challenging that
John Frederic Oberlin decided to
accept the charge and set out with
his sister, Sophia, a girl of twenty,
for Waldersbach on the 30th of
May, 1767.

Waldersbach

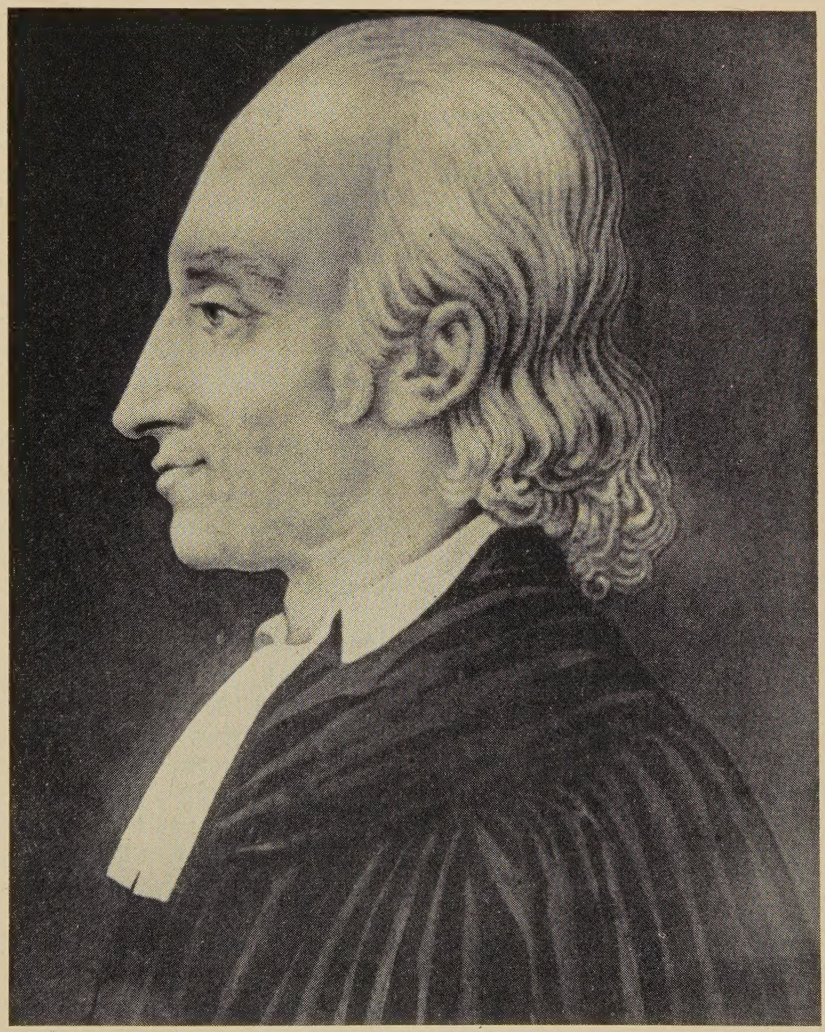
Several hours later they arrived at
the Steinthal in the Vosges. The ap-
proach to the valley where Oberlin
was to labor was romantic, the road
winding down the side of a steep
precipice towards the southern side
of the valley where, after crossing
the stream, it rose again and the
cottages of the peasantry became
visible, partly set in plantations of
pine.

Waldersbach, centrally located,
stands upon the acclivity of the
mountain, about 1800 ft. up. The
other hamlets in his yoked parish
were Fouday, Belmont, Bellefosse,
and Zolbach. The parsonage at
Waldersbach was a commodious,
two-story, stone-faced house, very
much run down.

Here was Oberlin's challenge! His
first early response brought trouble:
One evening, as he and his sister
were sitting at the supper table,
Oberlin said: "Stuber warned me
about the rowdies here. I have a
hunch there's going to be trouble
tonight. I'm going out and beard
the trouble-makers in their den. Ex-
cuse me."

The Bold Approach

Oberlin left in spite of Sophia's
protests. He sauntered along the
pathway toward the tavern. On the



John Frederic Oberlin

way; near the watering trough, he heard voices.

"This young preacher'll not expect us on a night like this. When we get through with him he'll not be able to crawl out of the valley."

"Yeah, let's run 'im out before he gives us any of his high falutin's stuff."

As he came suddenly upon them Oberlin said, "Brethren, here I am —why walk to the parsonage to find me. Here I am! Aren't you going to beat me up?"

One of the rowdies answered, "Shucks, parson, we was just goin' to play a joke on ya—we didn' mean no harm."

"Very well," replied Oberlin, "I believe you, and I shall expect to see you in church on Sunday instead of at the tavern. Goodnight gentlemen."

This bold approach to all problems carried John Frederic Oberlin over many obstacles.

Personal Happiness

It is now the latter part of June, 1768. The parsonage shows promise of what it is to become. The furniture is simple, home-made and durable. Into this humble setting Sophia's friend, Madeleine Witter, the daughter of Professor Witter of Strasburg, enters. She is a beautiful girl in her early twenties, and later becomes Oberlin's wife.

The two-story home in Waldersbach soon matured to the great center of activity it was foreordained to be. Throughout the house there was dignity, order and cleanliness. The furniture remained simple. There were texts of scripture over all the doors. Well-chosen books lined the cases, for Oberlin's home served as a community library. Engravings, portraits, plates of insects, animals, and grasses were numerous. Colored drawings of minerals and stones completed the array.

The workshop, just to the rear of the kitchen, contained a turner's lathe, press, carpenter's tools, a small printing press and book bindery. Entering the house with a spinning wheel when he had been married only a few weeks, Oberlin said to his wife:

"I am a firm believer that idle hands are the willing instruments of Satan. May I present you with this new spinning wheel?"

"Thank you, John," replied his wife, "but I have never operated one in my life. Can you show me how?"

"Yes, m'lady. See? It's very simple." (He leaves as Madeleine begins spinning and, with their handyman, goes into their garden.)

Planting Apple Trees

"Now, William, let's plant a row here and cultivate it like everyone has in the past; then, here nearer the the path, we'll set the ones we plan to handle specially."

They plant the young apple trees. As they are digging trenches around their special row of trees and filling them with compost, several of the villagers come along and pooh-pooh the job. Oberlin, minus his clerical garb, is the butt of many sharp remarks.

The trees grew and yielded well. Oberlin won another citadel.

The School

His next challenge came from an area of long standing need: schools. With assistance from Stuber, now in Strasburg, and many friends from afar, Oberlin constructed a school in Waldersbach. Madeleine was a great help.

Great things followed. Oberlin changed the very language of the people. Monitors, judges and juries were used in the school government. And, think of it, drawing with color was taught. Wisely, too, every child was to plant a tree. The seeds of learning and culture were carefully planted.

Tragedy Befalls

No life is without sorrow, and in 1784 Madeleine Oberlin passed away. Three sons and four daughters survived. Oberlin was stricken to the core with grief. Then, one day, while in his garden, he saw a vision of his dear friend and wife. From that day on he had renewed courage for his work.

He formed an agricultural club. His interests in better farming led him to import flaxseed from Riga; clover from Holland; the potato from France.

The tempo of history's rhythm was soon changed by the advent of the French Revolution.

Public worship was forbidden. Therefore, church meetings were like a family meeting or circle.

Yet Oberlin found time to do the practical things. He sent Sebastian Scheidecker to college to become a druggist. A drug store was established in Oberlin's home.

Other Triumphs

As the years rolled on and the French Revolution receded into the past, more and more practical triumphs were to crown Oberlin's efforts. An agricultural machinery pool was founded for repairs and lending purposes. New airy homes were the order of the day. Oberlin's preaching and philosophy played heavily upon the note of the importance of the individual.

Others recognized this change in the valley of stone and knew who was responsible. In 1818, John Frederic Oberlin, now 78, was called to Paris by the Central Society of Agriculture and was decorated by Count de Neufchateau who closed his eulogy with these words:

". . . it gives me peculiar pleasure to present you with an opportunity of acknowledging, in the person of M. Oberlin, not a single act but a whole life devoted to agricultural improvements, and to the diffusion of useful knowledge among the inhabitants of a wild and uncultivated district. . . ."

A cloudy day in June 1826 marked the benediction of a long, useful life—John Frederic Oberlin was dead. The Reverend M. Jaegle read Oberlin's prayer message to a large congregation in the church at Waldersbach:

"Thou, O dear Parish, God will not forget you, nor abandon you. Oh! that you might forget my name to always remember that of Jesus Christ whom I have preached. (May those who come after me always serve him that Europe might be saved from tyrants.) In the dark days ahead may the men of God keep their faith through all the darkness and evil.

"Goodbye, dear friends, I have loved you much."

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A Call on Albert Schweitzer at Gunsbach

BENSON Y. LANDIS

• While planning a European vacation I had made a note, somewhat tentatively, to locate Günsbach, the village in Alsace, which is the home of Dr. Albert Schweitzer and the European headquarters of his endeavors. Then Dr. Schweitzer came to America to deliver a lecture on Goethe and also to speak in New York at a luncheon to which I was invited.

Having seen Dr. and Mrs. Schweitzer at the luncheon, I determined at least to go to the village in which he lived, leaving until later any thought of seeing him. He might not be there, he might not wish visitors, I might have to go early in the day or late, it might seem an imposition for me to call. These considerations and others might affect an informal call on the man who had just had great acclaim in America.

Many had remarked that Schweitzer was fortunate in his publicity in the U.S.A. Publicity is a two-edged sword—it can hurt as well as help a man. It was good to see that Schweitzer's helped him. There seemed to be something in hard-bitten newspaper men that enabled them to sense spiritual values in a man who had with good reason been called "the greatest man in the world."

Locating Günsbach

The task of locating Günsbach proved to be so interesting that I would like to tell about it. I thought I could call the French Tourist Office in New York. I did so, but the name of this village did not appear in their records. "Try the French Railroads," they suggested. The New York office of the French Railways was equally helpless. The name was not in any atlas, not to mention a guide book.

Then I went to the atlases and maps in the Library of the Federal Council, but no trace of Günsbach could be found. I knew Dr. Schweitzer's American friends could tell me, but I also knew how busy they were helping Dr. Schweitzer while he was in the U.S.A. Finally, Agnes Campbell, librarian of the Federal Council, read in the books about Schweitzer that Günsbach must be west of Colmar and probably near Muenster, southwest of Strasburg in Alsace.

Thus armed I sought advice of a few prominent church officials in European capitols. They were not particularly helpful or encouraging. One seemed a bit astonished, and asked whether I actually wanted to see Dr. Schweitzer. I replied, Yes, I wanted to, but was not sure I could or should—I had long tried as an editor not to burden the people on whom I called. Later, my advisers in Europe proved to be as mistaken as many of my advisers in the U.S.A. have been on other subjects.

Villages of Alsace

Rev. and Mrs. M. R. Zigler of the Brethren Service Commission, with headquarters in Geneva, were of somewhat the same mind as Mrs. Landis and I. So we journeyed hopefully in the Zigler's car from Switzerland. Our destination was Waldersbach, the home of John Frederic Oberlin. Along the way was Günsbach, the home of Albert Schweitzer. And we had learned that he was there.

On reaching Colmar, we found Günsbach not too well known to those of whom we asked directions. Finally, someone who knew was found, and soon we approached the little village. It is perhaps typical of the smaller villages of Alsace. There are dairy barns in the village, and Dr. Schweitzer works at Günsbach within range of the usual smell of dairy barns. I mention this because I think it would be a good thing if more church officials worked and lived as near such potent influences in the world as dairy barns.

The Village Church

We walked first to the church, and heard that someone was playing the organ. Our hopes were high. We entered the church on finding the door open, to learn that the village organist was giving a lesson, and not

to hear Dr. Schweitzer play the music of Bach. After seeing the church, which had its steeple shot away in World War II in about the same way as it lost a steeple in World War I, we went about the village.

Without our asking, the village people told us that Dr. Schweitzer was there and pointed to his house. We wandered by to see Dr. Schweitzer near a window in his study working on a manuscript. We admired the trees and gardens when up came a cabinet maker who lives and works in the house next to Schweitzer's. We talked about his products, but he directed the conversation promptly to Schweitzer. He was a good mind-reader and said: "You have come to see Dr. Schweitzer." We admitted as much, saying we had seen him at his work and that it might be "wrong" to interrupt him. The cabinet maker said he knew better what would be right and wrong—it would be wrong if we did not call. Soon he had walked us into the Schweitzer home without knocking, we had introduced ourselves, and Dr. Schweitzer was quickly asking friendly questions of us.

Protestant-Catholic Cooperation

We already knew that Dr. Schweitzer was a philosopher, a theologian, a musician, a physician, a missionary. We asked about Günsbach, about the village church. When Dr. Schweitzer spoke in German I understood all he said. When I spoke in English—or American—he said he understood. His secretary did a little interpreting for the others in the group.

I had noticed that the Lutheran church had a section behind a screen that seemed equipped for a Roman Catholic service. I had previously read that Günsbach had one of the churches which by decree of Louis XIV was made accessible to Protestants and Catholics. I asked Dr. Schweitzer a question about this and found that he wanted to talk about it.

There are still seventeen such churches left in Alsace, he said. Once there were many more. Dr. Schweitzer urges the people of Günsbach to keep the arrangement indefinitely. He said now that he is past seventy years of age he is able to speak his mind on all subjects to the people of Günsbach. This is one subject on which they always hear him gladly. Catholics and Protestants live in harmony in Günsbach, he believes. Thus Catholic mass is said and the Lutheran liturgy is read at different hours on a Sunday morning just as in the days of Schweitzer's youth.

Seven Feet of Snow

In World War II, Günsbach was near the scene of fighting, as the allied armies drove the Germans out of Alsace. It was the snow that saved Günsbach, Dr. Schweitzer told us. There was seven feet of snow in the valley, he remarked with satisfaction, when the armies were active. And seven feet of snow in the valley was too much for any army. The result was that the armies moved around Günsbach. Dr. Schweitzer had expected the buildings of the village to be reduced to rubble. He had already written out preliminary plans for dealing with the destruction. Fortunately he never had to use them.

Dr. Schweitzer knew well of the career of John Frederic Oberlin. He was pleased to hear me say that the name of Oberlin is revered in America, that country ministers still study his life, and that pilgrims from America still wish to visit his parish.

Affection for a Place

Dr. Schweitzer retains his affection for this rural place. He seemed very glad of the way the people in the church of his father, in Günsbach, and those in the church of his grandfather, nearby, consistently ask him to preach at their Sunday services. And he, we gathered, loves to preach as often as he can in these village churches. Frequently he goes to the church of Günsbach and plays the organ.

Dr. Schweitzer told us that the study in the home at Günsbach is arranged the same way as the one at Lambaréné, in Africa. He has a cot near the desk in both places, so that rest may be sought as needed. He talked about the trees and the gardens. The latter are very productive of both flowers and vegetables. The soil is fertile. The hills are low and rolling. The valley is well drained. Farming is diversified and one gathers, of the family type with emphasis on production for home use. Dr. Schweitzer aims to pay more attention in the future to the development of agriculture at Lambaréné.

The universality, the friendliness, the humanity of the man impressed us as we reflected on the brief call at Günsbach. There was professional competence, yes, but professional competence plus. The rich symphony of powers in one personality had blessed us as we went on our way. For us at least the humble craftsman who led us into the house had been right—it would have been wrong not to go in.

On Developing Leaders

• One thing the people interested in furthering cooperative organization must do, Monsignor M. M. Coady told his audience at the Co-operative, Conference, Lake Geneva, Wis., last summer, is to reach the "natural leaders" of the groups they seek to interest.

This would include the leaders of labor, church, school and other groups not directly involved in co-operatives.

The saving made through co-operatives, Dr. Coady pointed out, is "new-found money; why not use it to the limit for social purposes!"

—*The Cooperative Consumer*

Farm and National Cooperative Organizations

• The American Institute of Co-operation, 1302 18th Street, N. W., Washington 6, D. C., has issued a list of major farm and national co-operative organizations. An outline of the functions, principal activities and methods of operation of these organizations is given in the pamphlet in the hope of developing a greater understanding on the part of educators and the public concerning the objectives and programs of these organizations.

"I'll Stick To My Country Pulpit"

J. B. KING

After twenty-two years, the chance ne to leave the country and take ne position in the city. For eleven rs, I had been engaged in rural cation, and for another eleven rs I had served as pastor of a ntry church. Twenty-two years of d work with minimum income l certainly discharged my obliga- n to the farm people. People ld not say that I was running out them.

Life in the city would be so dif- ent—more opportunities to meet ferent types of people, wider social izons, many cultural advantages, chance to live a life away from prying eyes of every neighbor, l—above all—good pay.

But no, it wasn't as easy as that; many memories and too many ts had to be considered first. There s the time when we moved into r first country parsonage. No- ere in either the university or the inary had I been told what to pect.

The house had nine rooms and bath, instead of eight and a bath. ne floors were porous, the paper the walls ancient, the basement possible, and the kitchen would ve frightened a home-economics cher to death. All that recom- ended the house was that a home ht plant had been installed some ars earlier—but the batteries were ad.

oneer Spirit

It was then I discovered that the irit of the pioneers still existed the country. It was a real experi- ce to remodel the house with the lp of our farmer neighbors, using hatever materials we were able to provise.

Then there was the night when r first-born became suddenly very l. At one o'clock in the morning, we antically called the doctor, ten miles stant, on the party telephone. Be- re he was able to arrive, two eighbors were at the house. Both ade themselves useful and com- rting. If I move to the city, will the neighbors help me when I am in trouble?

As long as there are farm people, the spirit of bold independence, which has always marked American history, will continue. Our church was too small; we needed larger and better accommodations. So the people got together in town-hall style to discuss the building of a new church.

After many hours of discussion, the decision was reached to build a new church. Not much money could be gathered, but all the people were willing to work. To hire an architect seemed ridiculous, but after a major bout with the official board and the building committee, I had my way and a church architect drew up the plans.

Horses, tractors, shovels, spades, and men; sandwiches, cake, gallons of coffee, glasses, cups, and women. Everything was ready to start, but there was a lack of leadership. So the "Reverend" staked out the basement, did the wiring, planned and directed the plumbing, supervised the blueprints.

Two or three men showed themselves more capable and faithful than others. With these to help direct the work, the building proceeded until, by fall, it was completed. Thousands of donated man-hours of work and $18,000 completed a church which on today's standards would cost $75,000.

What Is Security?

Ah, for me the city would be much more secure. How could I continue with the old car much longer? It would cost me more than a year's salary to purchase a new car. Then there was insurance to buy, pension money to lay aside, books and magazines for the study. With a growing crop of children to be educated, the financial future was none too bright. In the city it would be easier; salaries are much higher, schools near at hand, no car necessary.

Just then there came a knock at the door. The chairman of the improvement committee stood on the porch. He said, "Reverend, will you and your wife come to the church with me and discuss the improvements we ought to make in the church kitchen?"

We went willingly; it was dark in the church, but just as we stepped in the door the lights flashed on. The building was filled with people. It was a surprise. Recognizing the cost of living, these people brought such a food shower that the cupboard would not be bare for many a month. Then to cap the climax, an envelope was presented. In it sufficient money to buy that needed new car.

No, security is not measured in salary; rather, it is measured in the friends one has, in the land, and its willingness to produce.

Should I leave the country and go to the city where opportunity seemed so great? I walked out into the garden.

The sun was just setting behind the tree-crowned hills. The early summer roses were heavy with perfume. Our second planting of beans was just pushing up out of the ground like funny, old stooped-shouldered men. The mighty oak in our front yard, which for more than 150 years had defied the elements, was rustling and whispering in the evening breeze.

Just then a whippoorwill called; from the opposite tree-clad hill came the answer. Have you ever heard a whippoorwill? Would I ever hear one in the city?

I had my answer then. No, I would

not leave the country, with its farm people, its families, its birds, its joys, and its sorrows. The trek into the city will continue, but I shall not be a part of it.

—From *Successful Farming*, by permission.

New Religious Films

• *Into the Good Ground*, a new type of film on the Bible, was produced by the Pathescope Company for the Presbyterian Board of Christian Education under the supervision of the Rev. W. L. Jenkins, General Manager of the Publication Division.

"The film is intended to stimulate a renewed interest in the study of the Bible," says Mr. Jenkins. "The central character is an intelligent, professional man who is a nominal Christian, familiar with the Bible. When his son rejects the career he had carefully planned for him, he becomes embittered. He is aroused from this attitude only when, through a series of events, he comes to the realization that religion is not the vital driving force in his life that he had thought it.

"Turning now to the Bible out of a sense of need, the message of love for others which he finds there strikes home with real meaning."

The film's running time is approximately 30 minutes and it will rent for $10 from The Religious Film Association, 45 Astor Place, New York 3, N. Y.

• *Prejudice*, the first motion picture ever produced in this country under exclusively religious auspices to achieve commercial theatrical distribution, had simultaneous first showings in more than one hundred cities in the United States and Canada, as well as in London, England, in October, it was announced by Paul F. Heard, executive secretary, Protestant Film Commission.

Prejudice probes deeply into the psychological basis of hatreds among groups. The film was produced in cooperation with the Anti-Defamation League, and was sponsored by the city and state councils of churches.

Methodist Family-Farm Opportunities

• A study of Methodist conferences has revealed that nine in the midwest own a total of eighty-three farms.

In addition to the conference-owned farms which are rented to tenants on a basis consistent with the standards of the community in which they are located, the conferences referred to also have funds which enable them to take mortgages on farm property. As of July 1948, a total of $1,501,186 was invested in farm mortgages. The interest rate is reasonable and the terms of the mortgage contract are reasonable. In order to protect the funds of the church, the prospective mortgagee must meet the given requirements. He must be a good risk. The F.H.A. will insure loans and mortgages, and thus offer excellent protection for the conferences and other leaders if they avail themselves of this service.

A Way of Life

The Methodist Church, along with other Protestant churches, is vitally concerned with the family farm. It believes that it should be preserved as a way of life. By renting farms the church has no desire to increase or promote farm tenancy in any way. The conference agencies which rent the farms look forward to the time when families are in a position to own the farms they operate for they believe that tenancy should be a step in the direction of farm ownership.

The farms of which the church is landlord are large enough to supply an adequate income for both the landlord and the tenant. Although some farms are as small as eighty-three acres, no small farm is rented to a family unless that family has other land available, either to rent or to own. No farm is rented unless adequate financial support for the tenant family can be secured.

Church Affiliation

The question is often asked: "Are Methodist owned farms rented exclusively to Methodist families?" The immediate answer is, "No." We have on our conference farms Catholics, Lutherans, Amish, and several other non-Methodist families. But a one-word answer would be incomplete and unfair. Ideally, the goal of each conference is that there shall be a Methodist family on a Methodist farm. Practically, this is not possible. At times, a Methodist tenant is not available. Occasionally, an available Methodist tenant is not desirable either because of character or farming ability. A good farmer who is willing to cooperate with the landlord, who is honest, who will be a desirable neighbor is given first consideration. Church affiliation, while important, is not the determining factor. Church membership and active participation is encouraged.

Our church has an opportunity and an obligation. The farms it owns and the mortgages it holds represent the opportunity and also provide the means to fulfill the obligation. We have an opportunity to be of service to the families of rural America. We can serve them by making farms and funds available on fair and reasonable terms. The communities in which the farms are located expect the church to be among the front ranks of those who promote and encourage the family farm as a way of life and are disappointed when the church fails.

—J. Ellis Webb in *The Rural Church*

Bus Boosts Rural Church Attendance

• Attendance at the Federated Church of North Jackson, a rural community church in western Mahoning County, Ohio, has increased from forty to sixty at both Sunday school and church services for the past few weeks as the result of a bus pickup service authorized by the joint committee of the church.

The bus purchased by the church starts its rounds at 9:00 A.M. each Sunday, covering the near-by Lake Milton resort district and arriving at the church for both morning services. The second trip returns the worshipers to their homes.

The Rev. Lewis J. Raymond is pastor of the church.

—*Religious News Service*

Christmas in the Country

I remember as a boy standing in e Reading Terminal in Philadel- ia on an afternoon before Christ- as, watching the people rush to ve the city. Many were going to mes in the hills of Pennsylvania, ich was home to me. I knew, of urse, that many were rushing to to other cities, but it has always en impressive to note that in a eat urban nation there are throngs at consider it good to have Christ- as in the country. These latter ars I have often seen the same assive demonstration at the Grand entral Terminal in New York on e day before Christmas.

At a time which is for families d for children, it is appropriate to t out of the city. There are spots great cities where child life ractically disappears. Life is so hard, e city mechanism is so forbidding, at children cannot live there.

In the experience of the human ce, the country is the place for ildren. Wise men have set down e farm as the "best home of the mily." In the country at least ere is cherished and cultivated at feeling of the old time for chil- ren, of which Robert Frost once emarked that the modern age has oo little.

With Christmas came the Light o the World, and it is a great festival ssociated with Light and lights. Not without reference to deep hu- nan experience is Christmas cele- rated with lights on December 25. On December 25th the darkest days, .e., those with the lowest propor- ion of light, have passed. The days o come will have more light. And with this great turn of the cycle of he year comes also, it has been thought, a turn in the human spirit toward optimism and light con- trasted with pessimism and darkness. All life, it appears, goes in cycles. There are days when we take to the wings of the morning and fly to the uttermost parts of the sea, in our joy; there are days when we do the opposite.

The country is preeminently the place where darkness and light can be fully felt and appreciated. The ordinary city has so much artificial light that the stars and the moon are rarely looked at by the cliff dwellers who live on the sides of caverns known as apartment houses. It is in the country that when it is dark, the lights of the moon and the stars are known to man. In the country there is the best opportunity to appreciate the lights needed by spirits of men.

The countrymen should be natural candidates for enlistment in the cause advanced by courageous churchmen who are striving to rescue observance of Christmas from the clutches of commerce and commercialism and restore to it the spirit which was in Christ our Lord. Too long have Christians shown indifference to the depths to which the observance of Christmas has descended. Although agriculture has been plunged into a price and market regime, and a commercial agriculture is here, rural life is perhaps less than urban life enveloped by the commercial spirit.

At least there are signs that among countrymen there is still a spirit which emphasizes productivity rather than exploitation, a motive to will and to know that which is good and true rather than to sell at Christmastime. This is a spirit native. High pressure business has not killed it.

To all of us at all times the meaning of Christmas comes as birth and rebirth. Unless there is born within us something of the spirit of Jesus Christ our Lord, Christmas passes without significance. The country is the place where birth and rebirth recur in sequence for all to see. Perhaps if the modern world regains its perspective and attains knowledge of a natural order by which it is good that men should live—then there will again be an appreciation of the spiritual values inherent in rural life and of the way by which these re-enforce the way and the truth and the life which came into the world with the Babe of Bethlehem.—RUSTICUS

Christian Education at Home

• A new type of conference for young people was held last summer by a rural Presbyterian church in Allardt, Tenn., acccording to an article in a recent issue of *Monday Morning*, Philadelphia, Pa. The conference was held at home, because the young people were unable to attend conferences at a distance.

Planned for more than a year by the church's pastor, the Rev. Vernon Robinson, the week-long program began at five each evening with a period of recreation. This was followed by the evening meal, vespers, evening watch, and a worship service.

American Country Life Association

• The annual conference of the American Country Life Association, which was held in Columbus, Ohio, September 7-9, was called by many "the best and most vital ACLA meeting in years." More than 300 men and women registered, representing numerous groups and special interests, including the church, farm organizations, Government, business and industry, education, recreation, and health.

The meeting commemorated the thirtieth anniversary of the founding of the Association and the fortieth anniversary of the report of Theodore Roosevelt's Country Life Commission, which was the inspiration for the organization's birth. The Commission's report served as a bench mark for measuring the years of rural progress since 1909. This was also the theme of the ACLA's executive secretary, Paul V. Maris, Farmers Home Administration consultant, who addressed the convention on the "Highlights of Forty Years in Rural Life."

Regarding the rural church, Mr. Maris pointed out the similarity of many of the problems facing clergymen and religious leaders now as in 1909, but he also found evidences of progress. The "fine work being done by the Committee on Town and Country and by the National Catholic Rural Life Conference" was specifically cited.

Of the Committee on Town and Country he said: "This group holds an annual convocation on the church in town and country which is a vital force in arousing interest and stimulating action. It issues a monthly publication called 'Town and Country Church.' It sponsors schools for rural ministers at land grant colleges. Just now it is sponsoring a number of one-day institutes on the church and the family farm.

"Many of the Protestant denominations now have employed rural officers," Mr. Maris continued. "These men are catalytic agents, disseminating information and spearheading needed reform. We have proof on every hand of the church's growing awareness of the rural problem and its responsibility in respect to it. More encouraging still is the ever-increasing number of trained and consecrated pastors of rural churches who are now creating oases of Christian activity amidst deserts of barren and sterile community life."

The conference was organized on a workshop rather than a speech-making basis, with ten different study groups holding two-hour sessions simultaneously at three different times during the convention.

With delegates free to attend the Workshop of their choice, the one on the Rural Church attracted the largest attendance, and nowhere at the conference was more evidence of stronger interest in community work and cooperation shown. The discussion in this group centered around the question, "What can the church do to help the rural community in determining farm policies that are beneficial to all people?" Some of the more important phases of national farm life with which the church should be concerned, it was reported, are: Rural housing, rural health and medical care, perpetuation of the family-type farm, cooperatives, the disposal of agricultural commodity "surpluses," landlord-tenant relations, farm labor, the conservation of natural resources, monetary policies, Government aid or subsidies, population increase, migrants, displaced persons, and the world community.

The religious study group agreed that "we must not only protect the inherent possibilities of communities, but churches must effectively aid in realizing the tremendous education, character-forming, and redemptive forces of the American rural community."

These same viewpoints were brought out by the conference's two nationally-known guest speakers, Bishop Edwin V. O'Hara, founder and honorary president of the National Catholic Rural Life Conference, and Bishop William C. Martin of the Methodist Church.

When discussing the motives that a rural pastor can offer to restrain the rush of his intelligent and imaginative boys and girls to the professions and attractions of city life, Bishop O'Hara said: "The rural pastor can say that economic independence is the best safeguard for intellectual independence; the widest distribution of economic independence in America is to be found in the families who own their own farms. He can say that next to ownership of productive property the most desirable thing for an intelligent person is to be self-employed, and that the greatest national good in the world is the perpetuation of one's own personality in one's children."

Bishop Martin affirmed that "nowhere can you find a more wholesome outlook on life than in the country where people live and work close to God. The church has a tremendous responsibility and a glorious opportunity in rural areas. What shall it profit a farmer," he paraphrased, "if he conserves his soil, fills his barn with produce, and secures every means of modern convenience for his home, and then discovers that life for him has no real meaning or adequate justification? The church can create and maintain the kind of motivation that gives meaning and purpose to life in the country."

Of the many groups represented at the convention, the church had the second largest number of affiliated workers present. Among the outstanding laymen taking an active part was Charles P. Taft, past president of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America. Mr. Taft served on a panel of national leaders who discussed the question, "What Does Agriculture Need?" Other panel members were moderator Frank W. Peck, managing director of the Farm Foundation; Allan B. Kline, president of the American Farm Bureau Federation; Albert S. Goss, Master of the National Grange; Mrs. Charles W. Sewell, administrative director of the Associated Women of the Farm Bureau; Philip W. Pillsbury, president of Pillsbury Mills, Inc.; Merle Thomas, past president of Rural Youth of the U.S.A.; and Jacob

yman, secretary-treasurer of the io Congress for Industrial Organ- ion.

presiding at different times dur- the conference were the out- ng ACLA president, Roger B. bett, agricultural counsel for the tional Association of Food Chains; io director of extension, C. M. guson, who was also official host the meeting; Joseph W. Fichter, ster of the Ohio State Grange; k Fox, editor of *Successful Farm- ;* Murray D. Lincoln of the Farm reau Mutual Insurance Company Ohio; Merle Thomas; and newly- cted ACLA president Milo K. anton, executive secretary of the sconsin Council of Agricultural operatives. The Rev. Burt E. nn, pastor of the Church of the thren, Bedford, Pa., was song der for the conference.

—Frances Fox

hy Do Rural Pastors Leave the Country?

Why do rural pastors leave the untry? "For pay, promotion and estige," said a rural pastor of many ars' experience during the confer- ce for town and country pastors at e Pennsylvania State College. "City aries are better and promotion mes faster to city preachers," he nt on to explain.

"That salary may look good," in- rupted a city pastor, "but there e a lot of extra expenses that go th it. I was a rural pastor. I'm now the city at twice the salary, but I n't save a bit more than I did in e country."

"But look at the conveniences you ve in the city," chimed in another ral clergyman. "Electric lights, throoms, handy stores, good hools for the children. . . ." But the ty man was not to be suppressed. Wait a minute, now! You are get- ng those things in the country these ays. And don't forget that a city throom has a water meter and a ill collector tied to it!"

And so the argument went on in a od-humored sort of way but with ore than a little seriousness under- eath the banter.

It was clear that many of the rural pastors present were not completely satisfied with conditions as they found them in the rural ministry.

They felt they were underpaid, considering their preparation and training. (According to a study made by the Department of Agricultural Economics and Rural Sociology, the average income of the rural pastor in twenty-seven Pennsylvania farming townships is approximately $2,100.) They agreed also that denominational officials favor city preachers when it comes to picking men for positions of leadership on boards, committees, and the like, and that in general a man who stays long in a rural pastorate is looked upon as a failure.

"I have been eleven years in my rural charge because I like the country and the country people," said one preacher. "But even my own parishioners are wondering what's wrong with me that I don't get a call to the city. I have had such calls, but I have turned them down."

Other complaints were the poor school and health facilities which the rural pastor's family faces in some communities; the better type of parsonage and its furnishings found in the city; the fact that the rural pastor has to do everything himself while the city man has an office secretary, perhaps a church visitor and well-trained directors of music, religious education and youth work to help him; and denominational programs and literature which are "slanted" toward the urban situation rather than to the rural.

A few pastors felt that in the city their wives and children would be "let alone," while in the rural areas they were always watched and gossiped about. Some objected to the way some rural churches are dominated and "bossed" by a single family or person, but the city men said they had such troubles too.

Several remarked that when a pastor has several churches to care for, as many rural pastors do, he has no time to do much more than "run around in a car and preach and get tired of hearing myself give the same sermon three or four times." These men felt that they could do a better, deeper job with the same number of people gathered into one church.

But when the discussion drew to a close, they were not satisfied. They wanted to have another forum at next year's conference—on the topic, "Why Rural Pastors *Stay* in the Country."

"God's 80 Acres"

• A recent issue of *The Christian Advocate,* Chicago, Ill., presents in pictorial form the story of the tract of land which The Urbandale Community Congregational Church, Iowa, leased for a five-year term.

Of this project Morris E. Fonda says: "The land which the church leased on a five-year basis is located on the outskirts of Des Moines, Iowa. With the help of conservation experts, contour lines were staked out, a diversion terrace was constructed, grass waterways were built and seeded. Thirteen farm equipment representatives cooperated by furnishing tractors and implements."

The Rev. Frederick Cooper, pastor of the Urbandale Community Church, instigated the project, and the town and country members of his church work "shoulder to shoulder" in the cultivation of "God's 80 Acres."

Purposes of This Journal

The purposes of this Journal are:

A. To encourage cooperation among rural churches.

B. To improve the administration of the local church, this to include organization of the church, finance, religious education, community relationships, and the training of lay leadership.

C. To stimulate the development of a Christian philosophy of rural life, this to embrace ethical issues in agriculture, social reconstruction, and government programs; and the content of the minister's message.

Part of Larger Program

The Journal is an important part of an enlarged "cooperative rural church program" that will encourage a national "rural church movement."

Twenty Years Later*

• The 1928 "Every Community Survey" of New Hampshire was the first state unit of the Five Year Program of Survey and Adjustment undertaken immediately after the National Church Comity Conference held in Cleveland in January of that year. No attempt was made to study in detail the equipment, program or budget of the individual church, or to evaluate the quality of its work. The 1928 study listed every town of less than 5,000, designating each as inadequately, adequately, and more than adequately churched.

In 1928 there were found to be 33 towns "inadequately" churched. In these towns there were 26 churches with only 372 members.

There were 83 "more than adequately" churched towns, where "the number of churches or ministers or both was greater than can be justified as necessary or efficient."

There were 106 "adequately" churched towns—i.e., those with enough churches in them, if the work of all of them were efficient.

The 1928 Survey found it "impossible to escape the conclusion that there must be a faster elimination of existing churches."

Recommendations in 1928

At a meeting held under the auspices of the Council of Churches of Christ in New Hampshire in 1928, certain findings were adopted. These urged closer cooperation among Protestants, "not more than one Protestant church in a community of one thousand or less, homogeneous as to language and color," the responsibility to serve all the people in a given area rather than only a denominational constituency, the adoption of the Larger Parish Plan, the development of a cooperative program of service for needy areas on a state-wide coordinated basis, house-to-house canvasses, pastors at large, the employment of a full-time Council secretary, and the study by the state Comity Committee of the recommendations for all inadequately or more than adequately churched towns.

These findings have been to a large measure fulfilled, in spirit, if not in letter. The interdenominational forces of the states have been consolidated, and the present practice among the denominational administrators is one of hearty and intelligent cooperation. One evidence of this was the request for a 1948 check-up of the 1928 study.

The Present Situation

The following tabulation shows the result of the 1949 appraisal as compared with the judgments reported in the 1928 survey. It should be remembered that the 1949 judgment is administrative and pragmatic, the 1928 appraisal more directed toward a theoretical norm.

	Number of Towns	
Listed as	*in 1928*	*1949*
Inadequately churched	33	24
Adequately	106	174
More than adequately	83	27
	222	225
Urban towns or cities	14	14 (a)
	236	239

(a) Not including Exeter and Newport.

Statistically considered, the present situation still leaves much to be desired. In 41 towns of less than 500 inhabitants, in 38 additional towns of from 500 to 999, and in 20 additional towns of 1,000 or more inhabitants there are less than 400 persons available per church. In all, there are 99 towns with less than 400 persons available per church. with 35 additional towns with less than 500 available. Out of 239 towns, only 16 have 1,000 or more persons available per church. In at least half a dozen towns, cited particularly as overchurched in 1928, only slight progress has been made in improving the situation.

These New England towns, and all rural American towns for that matter, were originally all of them overchurched. Every denomination proceeded on the theory that it should be represented by an outpost in every possible community. The net result seems to be that where the larger towns have grown or at least maintained themselves, even with declining population, overchurching has continued to exist. In the smaller towns, most denuded of their population (many of them have less people than they had a century ago) often only a single church has survived, and that a meager one, served by an absentee pastor in most instances.

In other words, the number of churches is in itself almost an index of the vigor of the community life. Two conclusions seem to follow: First, many of the areas where there are the fewest churches are the most difficult to serve, and are going to require the most careful ecumenical planning. Second, many of the towns might be served very much better were there fewer but stronger, more cooperative churches in them.

Unfortunately, however, merely to reduce the number of churches is no assurance that a town will be better served; in some instances it may be less well served. Adequacy is a matter of quality of program quite as much as number of churches.

1949 Recommendations

In the light of all available facts. the following suggestions are made for the provision of better service to small communities:

1. Worthier, more impressive worship.
2. Better grading of religious instruction.
3. Age and sex units of significant size to avoid the narrowness and lack of balance in groups that are too small, and to furnish more continuous leadership, better distribution as to age, and enough people of marriageable age so that new families may be constituted within the church fellowship.
4. Adequate resident ministry, able to render greater pastoral service and exercise stronger

* From the report of a 1948-49 check-up of the 1928 "Every Community Study of New Hampshire," made to the New Hampshire Council of Churches by Ross W. Sanderson on behalf of the Committee for Cooperative Field Research, 297 Fourth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

community leadership.
Adequate financial support for normal church life.

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onors for European Country Ministers

As one approaches Keble College Oxford University, one soon es that the street on which it is ated is also named for John ble, the author of *The Christian ar* and rector of Hursley, whose eer was described in TOWN AND UNTRY CHURCH for September 8.

The college was established as a morial to Keble on the initiative his friends. The architecture of buildings, unfortunately, is unventional for Oxford, and is not mired. The college dates from 70.

In Strasburg, France, one finds th a street and a museum for hn Frederic Oberlin, the pastor of e Lutheran church at Waldersch, thirty miles southwest of the y. Oberlin was living in Strasburg nen he was in every sense called to aldersbach. Oberlin was one of a all company of "city men" who ve gone into the country ministry.

The founders of Oberlin College 1833 had heard of the work of hn Frederic Oberlin. They deded that it would be appropriate name the institution after the ral pastor of Alsace, because they d decided "upon some definite e of effort which should produce e maximum of spiritual benefit to 'perishing world.'"

In the current bulletin of Oberin College School of Theology we ad concerning Oberlin that "his nception of the ministry was roadly social, and he believed the urch to have a mission to every hase of life." Finding the spirit and otives of the pastor of Alsace milar to their own, Rev. John J. hepherd and Mr. Phila P. Stewart, e founders, gave the name of berlin to the college in Ohio. The rst theological students came to berlin, Ohio, in 1835, to which on came the great theologian and vangelist, Charles G. Finney.

—B.Y.L.

Harvest in England

• Rev. Roy S. Lee, vicar of the University Church of St. Mary the Virgin, Oxford, England, wrote in his parish paper concerning the 1949 Harvest Festival, as follows:

"In these lean years, Harvest Festival has more than usual significance. We are still in the period of austerity, which may grow worse next year unless we are able to overcome the shortage of dollars to enable us to buy food from the hard currency areas. No one with any sense of decency complains at the austerity, for by bearing it we are helping in the struggle towards recovery not only of our own country, but of many other countries. There is a world shortage of food. But more than that, unless there is international planning on an enormous scale to augment present sources of food, there is likely to be severer shortage before not many years. The population of the world is increasing at the rate of 20 millions a year and the world production of food is not increasing on a scale sufficient to meet that and the raised standards of living in those countries, chiefly in Asia, where hundreds of millions of people are still living on or below the starvation level.

"To win from the soil and the sea the wherewithal to live is man's first task. There is no doubt that with the aid of science and large-scale organization he could do it successfully. But it requires cooperation, and instead of being united in facing this common need, men are divided against each other in national and class rivalries caused by social, political and religious prejudices and economic selfishness. Unless we can overcome these divisions, we cannot solve the problem of food. That is to say, man has not only to solve the problem of mastering nature, he has also to master himself as part of the other problem.

"It is here that Christianity comes in, for it alone sees the wholeness of the struggle and gives meaning to the warning that 'man does not live by bread alone.' Without the food of the spirit the food of the body will also disappear. Hence the value of Harvest Festival. It gives us an opportunity to link together the needs of the body and of the spirit in one act of thanksgiving; it gives us, too, an opportunity to rededicate ourselves as a community to the common welfare of all mankind.

"One thing is most encouraging. In our shortages we have learned how to share with one another much more than, I think, we did in times of plenty. We have become more conscious of the needs of others than we used to be, by finding that our own needs cannot always be met. There is, too, a greater sense of the duty of sharing with other nations, and we who occasionally receive generous gifts from abroad know that the sharing is itself shared. That is one of the most hopeful things in a world that is frequently depressing. Let us at our Harvest Festival cultivate that spirit and give God thanks that it is growing in the world."

Christian Programs in the East

• "Christianity must reach the Middle East, China and India with a dynamic and meaningful program before these areas are too deeply influenced by other forces," said Dr. Walter A. Anderson, professor of rural sociology at Cornell University, when reporting on a recent trip through the East, sponsored by Agricultural Missions, Inc.

Pointing out that peasants in these areas are clamoring for "at least something to eat," Dr. Anderson said the church could point the way to a solution of their need by the development of demonstration programs.

"The church cannot hope to solve all the economic and social problems of these areas," Dr. Anderson said, "but its programs can serve as lighthouses which will guide the people to solutions of their own."

Reporting at the same meeting was Dr. Mary Sweeny, child welfare specialist, who returned recently from a similar assignment in Asia. She pointed out that courses in social studies would aid young people to adjust to cultural transitions in their countries, especially in India where widespread social and political reforms have been launched.

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Rural Welfare Services, Benson Y. Landis	Nov.	16
Songs from the Land of Dawn, Toyohiko Kagawa and others	Sept.	16
BUILDING		
Beautiful Rural Church, C. Harrison Becker	Jan.	16
Shannondale Builds a Manse, D. O. Luginbill	May	12
Church School and Parish House	May	14
New Buildings for Christian Education, Elbert M. Conover	May	14
Architectural Highlights	Sept.	8
California		
Church Life in a Town, Ada L. Forster	Jan.	12
Call to the Heroic, James C. Rawlings	Mar.	8
Camp, We had a Parish, Lulu Hathaway	Apr.	12
Carr, James M., appointment to rural work for Presb. Church U. S.	Sept.	2
CATHOLIC Rural Life Conference	Jan.	16
Industrialism and Agrarianism	Apr.	8
Celo Community—North Carolina	Mar.	11
Christian Crusade	Oct.	10
Christian Rural Overseas Program	May	1
Christian Service Training Center, Fla.	Jan.	6
Christmas in the Country	Dec.	9
Church and Conservation of Soil, Mary L. Moore	Oct.	4
Church and the Country, Edwin L. Becker	Apr.	2
Church in a Four-Church Parish, J. P. Pennington	Nov.	12
Church, People Will Come to	Oct.	2
CHURCH WORLD SERVICE		
Seeds for Peace	Mar.	4
Daybreak—film	Sept.	4
Displaced Persons	Apr.	5
Relief for North Africa	Mar.	4
Clingan, Robert L., Does it Matter to Whom I Sell?	Oct.	8
Coady, M. M., Antigonish Movement	Mar.	1
Comfort, Richard O., Denominational Cooperation in a Community	Oct.	7
Community Councils, Robert A. Polson	Nov.	8
CONVOCATION		
Report of San Jose, Calif.	Feb.	Issue
1949 Conference at Lincoln, Neb. (program)	Sept.	14
COOPERATION		
Cooperative National Services	Nov.	5
Observations of Cooperatives and Churches, James D. Wyker	Jan.	10
Cornell University—In-Service Training	Jan.	8
Culver, Elsie T., Healing by the Roadside	May	6
Dawber, Mark A., Significance to our Denominations	Sept.	5
Woodcarving of DaVinci's Last Supper	Nov.	7
Decentralization of Industry (Nat'l Security Resources Board)	Mar.	12
Denominational Cooperation in a Community, Richard O. Comfort	Oct.	7
Displaced Persons	Apr.	5
Doctors and Horses	Jan.	10
Dod, Donald D., Plan of Guacio	May	4
Does it Matter to Whom I Sell? Robert L. Clingan	Oct.	8
DRAMA		
In the Rural Church, Margaret Blair Johnstone	Jan.	1
Project in Religious Drama, C. C. Saunders	Jan.	3
Easter Week, Charles Kingsley	Apr.	3
EDUCATION		
Story of the Antigonish Movement, M. M. Coady	Mar.	1
Protestant Strategy for Rural Christian Education, E. L. Becker	Sept.	3
Edwards, V. A.		
Five Year Plan for Rural Extension Work at Shaw University	Oct.	9
Church leadership conferences	Oct.	9
Erickson, T. A., Church and 4-H Clubs	Sept.	10
EVANGELISM		
Challenge of Rural America, Edwin L. Becker	Jan.	5
By Jeep in Puerto Rico	Mar.	10
Pilgrimage, R. C. Warder	Apr.	13
Farm Movement among Jews	Sept.	13
Farms, A Church Helps its Members Buy, Paul E. Miller	Oct.	5
FILMS		
Daybreak	Sept.	4
I am with You	Jan.	15
We Would be Building	Sept.	4
Library in Portland, Me.	Apr.	3

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sher, Elliott L.		
Chairman of Committee on Town and Country	Apr.	4
sk University		
Report of Rural Church Program	Apr.	15
od, Conditions and Prospects	Mar.	13
oreign Relief Needs	Dec.	16
orster, Ada L., Church Life in a California Town	Jan.	12
oulkes, Maurice G., prayer	Apr.	15
reene, Shirley E.		
America's Economic Trilemma	Mar.	5
His Own Vine and Fig Tree	Mar.	10
Small Discussion and Action Group	Apr.	1
rieser, Ralph, Collects in Spring	Mar.	16
roup Ownership of the Land, C. Morton Hanna	Mar.	3
rowing Grass-Roots, Philip Humason Steinmetz	Oct.	11
uacio, Plan of, Donald D. Dod	May	4
Hall, Oakel F.,		
Indiana County Holds Rural Church Institute	Jan.	7
Vocational Guidance to Rural Youth	Sept.	1
Hankins, James E., Pilot Charges	Mar.	7
Hanna, C. M., Group Ownership of the Land	Mar.	3
Harvest Festival—a Statement	Sept.	7
Hathaway, Lulu, We Had a Parish Camp	Apr.	12
Healing by the Roadside, Elsie T. Culver	May	6
HEALTH		
Church and Rural Health	Nov.	11
Healing by the Roadside (India), Elsie T. Culver	May	6
Illinois State Medical Society	Jan.	10
National Council on Rural Health—Chicago	Apr.	4
Heifer Project	Mar.	4
Herb Revival, Benson Y. Landis	Jan.	13
Hibbard, Eugene, Lord's Auction and Sale	Apr.	7
Home Mission Congress	Nov.	4
Huber, Allen, Rural Work in the Philippines	May	3
Hummel, B. L., Three-Point Program	May	13
Illingworth, J. Davis, Larger Parish in Pennsylvania	Nov.	13
Imes, Ralph B., Oberlin, the Pastor at Waldersbach	Dec.	3
Importance of the Individual in the Rural Church, Charles Ackley	May	8
Indiana County Holds Rural Church Institute, Oakel F. Hall	Jan.	7
Industrialism and Agrarianism—Nat'l Catholic Rural Life Conf.	Apr.	8
In-Service Training		
Description of Schools	Apr.	16
School at Cornell	Jan.	8
Jews, Farm Movement in U.S.A.	Sept.	13
Johnstone, Margaret Blair, Drama in the Rural Church	Jan.	1
Kentucky—Study of Churches	Jan.	14
King, J. B., I'll Stick to my Country Pulpit	Dec.	7
Kingsley, Charles, Easter Week	Apr.	3
Landis, Benson Y.		
Raiffeisen's Brotherhood Credit	Nov.	9
Visit to Oberlin's Parish	Dec.	1
Albert Schweitzer at Günsbach	Dec.	5
Lord's Acre Auction		
Burnt Hills, N. Y.	Mar.	11
Warren, Ohio	Apr.	7
Lowdermilk in Africa	Oct.	10
Luginbill, D. O., Shannondale Builds a Manse	May	12
LUTHERAN		
Church in Iowa	Jan.	16
Placement Service	Sept.	11
Man with the Plow, Murray L. Wagner	May	5
Marlboro College	Nov.	7
Melbourne Village—Florida	Jan.	15
METHODIST		
Family-Farm Opportunities	Dec.	8
Revolving Fund in Covington, Ky.	Mar.	15
Rural Training in Colleges	Apr.	10
Miller, Paul E., Church Helps its Members Buy Farms	Oct.	5
Moore, Mary L., Church and Conservation of the Soil	Oct.	4
MUSIC		
Christian Youth Movement, Felix G. Robinson	May	10
Hollywood Methodist Church, Md. (Fulton Lewis, Jr.)	May	11
Nace, George I., new secretary of H.M.C.	Sept.	7
National Laymen's Association	Jan.	4
New Hampshire, Comparative Survey 1928-1949	Dec.	12
Oberlin, John Frederic		
Pastor at Waldersbach, Ralph B. Imes	Dec.	3
Visit to Parish, Benson Y. Landis	Dec.	1
Observations of Cooperatives and Churches, James D. Wyker	Jan.	10
Pennington, J. P., Church in Four Church Parish	Nov.	12
PENNSYLVANIA		
Study of Closed Rural Churches	Mar.	13
Larger Parish in, J. Davis Illingworth	Nov.	13
Pennsylvania Dutchman	Oct.	15
People Will Come to Church	Oct.	2
Peru Plan, Robert B. Thomas	Nov.	3
Philippines, Rural Work in, Allen Huber	May	3
Phillips College of the Bible, Chair of the Rural Church	Mar.	10
Pilot Charges, James E. Hankins	Mar.	7
Polson, Robert A., Community Councils	Nov.	8
Programs, Rural Church Organization, Daniel Russell	Sept.	12
Promoting Christian Unity in the Rural Community, Robert B. Thomas	Apr.	1
Protestant Strategy for Rural Christian Education, Edwin L. Becker	Sept.	3
Raiffeisen's Brotherhood Credit, Benson Y. Landis	Nov.	9
Rawlings, James C., Call to the Heroic	Mar.	8
Renewal at the Roots, Thomas Alfred Tripp	Nov.	1
Robinson, Felix G., Christian Youth Movement	May	10
Russell, Daniel, Broad Program of Rural Church Organization	Sept.	12
Saunders, C. C., Project in Religious Drama	Jan.	3
Shannondale Builds a Manse, D. O. Luginbill	May	12
Schweitzer, Albert, at Günsbach, by Benson Y. Landis	Dec.	5
Shaw University		
Five Year Plan for Extension Work, V. A. Edwards	Oct.	9
Significance to our Denominations, Mark A. Dawber	Sept.	5
Smith, Walter A., Art in Rural Community	Apr.	9
Steinmetz, Philip Humason, Growing Grass-Roots	Oct.	11
Thomas, Robert B., Peru Plan	Nov.	3
Thomas, Robert B., Promoting Christian Unity	Apr.	1
Town and Country Committee, Cooperative Services	Nov.	5
Tripp, Thomas Alfred, Renewal at the Roots	Nov.	1
Vocational Guidance to Rural Youth Oakel F. Hall	Sept.	1
Voltaire Built it for God, William L. Bailey	Jan.	9
Wagner, Murray L., Man with the Plow	May	5
Warder, R. C., Evangelistic Pilgrimage	Apr.	13
Wentzel, Fred D., Our Kinship with the Earth	Nov.	13
Wyker, James D., Observations of Cooperatives and Churches	Jan.	10
YOUTH		
Christian Movement	May	10
Church and 4-H Clubs, T. A. Erickson	Sept.	10
Vocational Guidance, Oakel F. Hall	Sept.	1

Future Plans

The January issue of TOWN AND COUNTRY CHURCH will contain a summary of statistical data on the rural church situation in the U.S.A. by H. Paul Douglass.

Foreign Relief Needs

• Denominational executives and church members have been asking for some time when the appeals for help for war victims will end. When emergency campaigns for funds were organized and generously supported at the close of the war, it was rather widely assumed that within a couple of years people would be able to take care of themselves—at least in Europe.

However, appeals have continued to come to American Christians for money, food, clothing, assistance to Displaced Persons, and other needs. A natural weariness in well-doing has settled upon us. Most of us wonder when taxes will be substantially cut and when we can spend more money on ourselves with a clear conscience. Here and there a question is raised as to whether the needs abroad are real, or whether those on the staffs of the church relief agencies are exaggerating the needs in order to maintain their own jobs.

Personal Observation

The plight of the Displaced Persons is pathetic. We must finish the job of taking care of them. But we must also consider the refugees: (a) people of German ethnic origin, former citizens of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary and other Balkan countries, who were expelled from those countries under terms of the Potsdam Agreement; (b) German residents of territories formerly a part of Germany but now under Russian and Polish administration who were forcefully expelled; and (c) infiltrees or illegal border-crossers who have fled from behind the "iron curtain," seeking refuge in the western zones of Germany. These latter are of various nationalities.

At least seven millions of these refugees are in the western zones where Military Government estimates that 40 percent of the habitable dwellings were destroyed by bombing and shellfire and where the normal population alone would have had to import a large proportion of its food supply. In the American zone the population density per square kilometer increased, through the influx of refugees, from 133 in 1939 to 160 in 1946. The average in Europe is 56; in the United States, 7.

The living conditions of these people can be imagined, overcrowded in camps, barracks and all available houses. Unemployment among them is high and still rising. They are living in hardship and need relief.

Political Consequence

In addition to the distress of these people as human beings, we should be concerned about the political consequences of prolonged despair among them. To continue their present condition is to increase the likelihood that they will rally behind the most extreme leadership on the left or the right. Until something is done about their problem, Germany cannot become stable and Europe, in turn, cannot become stable.

Action by governments is required for a comprehensive solution of the problem. In the meantime, the suffering will continue and we as Christians must help with money and food and clothing and assistance to them in their struggle to maintain their church life. Such help will, by alleviating distress and proving that we care, keep hope alive and improve the chances of freedom and peace.

We would not create the impression that the German refugees are the only ones in need. Appeals are urgent and strategic in various countries in Asia, in Greece and elsewhere in Europe and for Arab refugees in Palestine. Our responsibilities and opportunities are still great. We cannot yet relax.

—*Federal Council Bulletin*

Life Stream

• "Most of the churches of twelve major denominations are located in rural areas," writes David E. Lindstrom in a recent issue of *The Christian Advocate,* Chicago, Ill. The article—"Ours is a Rural Church"—cites statistics of church membership and attendance which show the predominance of the rural church in Methodism.

ATTENTION MINISTERS!
RURAL CHURCH CENTER
announces

Three schools for ministers in Town and Country for the winter and spring of 1950 as follows:

WINTER SCHOOL
January 17 to February 10, 1950

LATE WINTER SCHOOL
February 21 to March 17, 1950

SPRING SCHOOL
April 19 to May 4, 1950

For information and catalogue write

Rural Church Center
Green Lake, Wisconsin

"Christian Agriculture"

• The Rev. Shirley E. Greene, Agricultural Relations Secretary for the Congregational Christian Churches Council for Social Action, Meron Ind., is now issuing a monthly lette of personal comment on "the news. Developments in national agricultural policy; current agricultura legislation, farm organization activities, outstanding local projects, an agricultural and rural life literatu will be reviewed from a Christia point of view in this monthly lette which will bear the title, "Christia Agriculture."

Displaced Persons in the Countr

• "DP's Make Good Farm Hands, says James A. Ryberg in a recen issue of the *Rural Lutheran,* Min neapolis, Minn., and adds that "th problems of misunderstanding an incompetency have not been wha they were predicted to be."